

The A-String:
new music column, p. 11

Grokking the
Christian Right, p. 4

Why Germans
Loved Hitler, p. 9

THE INDYPENDENT

a FREE paper for free people • Issue #69, May 11 – 25, 2005

Survivor

**Sunao Tsuboi was hit by
an atomic blast in the city
of Hiroshima. Sixty years
later, he's preaching peace.**

JOHN TARLETON p6

**Nuclear non-proliferation
talks founder at the U.N.**

DONALD PANETH p6

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With autonomous chapters in more than 120 cities throughout the world, the Independent Media Center is an international network of volunteer media activists.

The IMC seeks to create a new media ethic by providing progressive, in-depth and accurate coverage of issues. We are a community-based organization using media to facilitate political and cultural self-representation. We seek to analyze issues affecting individuals, communities and ecosystems by providing media tools and space to those seeking to communicate. We espouse open dialogue and placing the means of communication and creativity back in the hands of the people, away from the drive of profit.

The *Indydependent* is funded by benefits, subscriptions, donations, grants and ads from organizations and individuals with similar missions.

WHAT CAN I DO TO GET INVOLVED?

The IMC has an open door. You can write for *The Indydependent*, film events and rallies, self-publish articles to the web, take photos or just help us run the office. As an organization relying on volunteer support, we encourage all forms of participation.

The print team reserves the right to edit articles for length, content and clarity. We welcome your participation in the entire editorial process.

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**COVER PHOTO
BY ANTRIM CASKEY**

Williamsburg's Dirty Bomb

BY RAHUL CHADHA

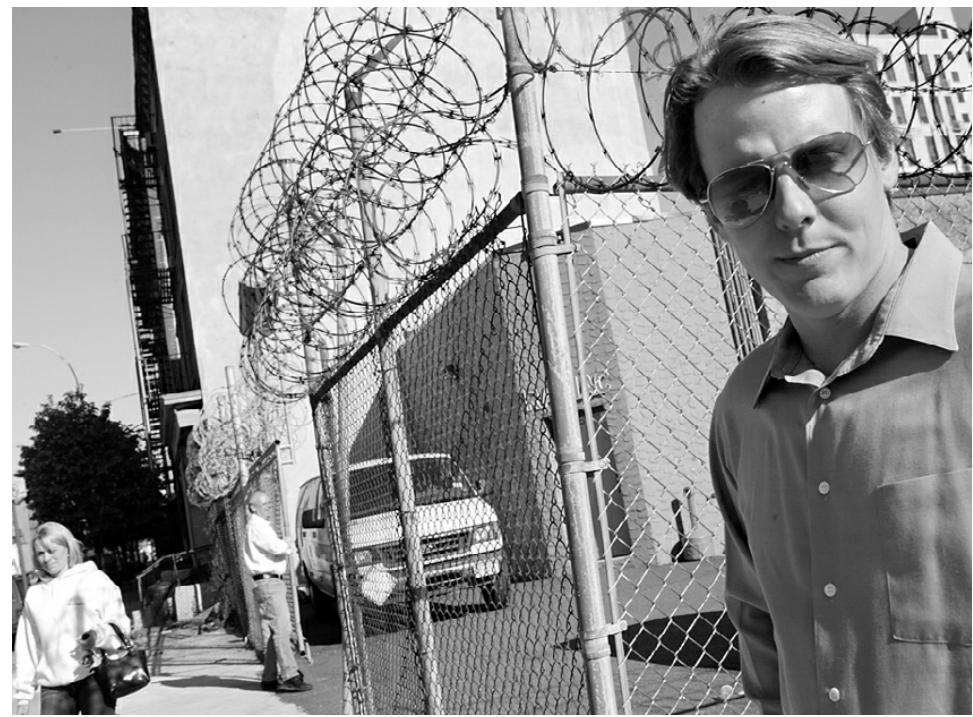
Radiac Research Corporation, headquartered in a low-slung building on Kent Ave. in South Williamsburg, has an innocuous enough appearance. But the sleepy one-story building belies the danger housed inside its brick walls. Stocked with barrels of some of the most poisonous and toxic chemicals known to man, as well as low-level radioactive waste, an accident in Radiac could easily trigger one of the worst environmental disasters New York City has ever seen, says Sean Nagle, the health and research director of activist organization El Puente Community Health and Education Institute.

"Depending on which way the wind blows, you're talking about a radius of three miles from Radiac," says Nagle, who lives three blocks away. "You could take out both airports, lower Manhattan and parts of Brooklyn."

Since the late 70s Radiac has been permitted by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to serve as a short-term storage site for containerized hazardous waste before it is shipped off for treatment, recycling or disposal. But it also has a separate permit issued by the State Department of Labor to handle low-level radioactive waste — things like test tubes, syringes and clothing that have come in contact with radioactive material.

Of major concern to activists and residents is the possibility that a fire beginning in the hazardous waste section of the site could easily leap to the adjoining radioactive waste storage space, transmuting the entire facility into a de facto dirty bomb. "It's pretty much the synergy of the two together that makes everybody scared," says Nagle.

An environmental impact study commissioned by the NYC Department of City



HIDDEN DANGER: Community activist Sean Nagle worries that Radiac's hazardous waste storage facility in the middle of Williamsburg could trigger an environmental disaster.

PHOTO: ANTRIM CASKEY

Planning during the recent north Brooklyn rezoning process noted that the site "has a long list of RCRIS violations," referring to the Resource Conservation and Recovery Information System, a database operated by the Environmental Protection Agency. According to the study, Radiac has been cited for violating both general standards of such a storage facility, as well as preparedness/prevention requirements.

The lax approach to securing the waste safely is something that troubles Deborah Masters greatly. "A person with ignoble intentions would have no trouble from the minimal security measures Radiac employs," says Masters, chair of the environmental committee of Community Board 1. "It would be so easy to start a fire while walking by the building."

Those opposed to Radiac's presence are in the midst of lobbying the DEC not to renew its hazardous waste materials permit, which is currently under review. Activists like Nagle and Masters hope that getting enough people to a May 23 public hearing before the DEC will convince the agency of the inappropriate location of Radiac.

El Puente's Nagle believes that without the hazardous materials permit, the monetary incentive for Radiac to remain in Brooklyn will evaporate. "I think they're just trying to stay here as long as they can, until it's not in their best interests anymore," he says.

For years, the minority and low-income residents of Williamsburg have played unwilling hosts to a bevy of environmental injustices: power plants, sewage treatment facilities, failed attempts to relocate garbage incinerators and a highly disproportionate number of waste transfer stations. The staggering environmental injustice is enough to frustrate anyone, including Masters.

"It just seems like {the residents} deserve better," she says. "It's very disheartening to me that all this money is being spent on homeland security while Williamsburg is being ignored. It's just bullshit."

A legislative public hearing for public comment on Radiac's hazardous waste permit will be held on May 23, 2005 from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. and again at 7 p.m. at Public School 84, 250 Berry Street (between Grand Street and South First Street) in Brooklyn.

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Rent Rage

BY BENNETT BAUMER

What turns senior citizens into irate foul-mouthed spectators and brings armies of homeless folks out from shelters? A Rent Guidelines Board vote to raise rents, of course. Tenants and homeless advocates maintained the tradition of theatrical RGB meetings at a May 3 preliminary vote on the rent increases for 2005-06. A rowdy crowd of about 200 people held signs and shouted slogans as the board passed Chairman Marvin Markus's proposed range of rent increases of between 2 and 4.5 percent for a one-year lease renewal and from 4 to 7 percent for two years.

The vote was 5 – 4, with the board's Bloomberg-picked public members all supporting the preliminary guidelines and both the landlord and tenant representatives voting no. At Cooper Union on June 21, the RGB will set the final guidelines, affecting millions of tenants in the city's rent-stabilized apartments who renew their leases in the year beginning Oct. 1.

Markus plowed through a blizzard of obscenities and chants of "rent freeze now" with rapid monotone legalese. He only stopped to bang his gavel and reprimand the most surly of protesters, including a middle-aged man with a stringy Afro clad in a fine suit who urged tenants to storm the stage where the board held court. When the man failed to start a march in one aisle, he raced over to another, lurching into rows of indignant tenants to rouse them into militant action. One person was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct after he refused to sit down.

After Markus spoke, RGB landlord representative Harold Lubell pleaded the case that landlords' expenses were rising and they need hefty rent increases. "Let's try to listen to some of those facts, it's for your benefit and the board's benefit," said Lubell. "We're not a welfare agency!"

"Don't speak to us like we're animals!" Lisa Burris, an observer, shouted back.

In the midst of the racket, a young child crawled into the aisle pursuing an errant matchbox car. His mother scooped him up and sat him in her lap as an older man a couple rows down belted



PHOTO: STEVEN WISHNIA

NYC Rent Guidelines Board 2005

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS AND HEARINGS

TUESDAY, JUNE 14

Public Hearing (Public Testimony)
NYC College of Technology,
Kiltgord Auditorium
285 Jay St., Brooklyn • 4–10 p.m.

THURSDAY, JUNE 16

Public Hearing (Public Testimony)
The Great Hall at Cooper Union
7 East 7th St. (at corner of 3rd Ave.),
Manhattan • 10 a.m.– 6 p.m.

TUESDAY, JUNE 21

Public Meeting (Final Vote)
The Great Hall at Cooper Union
7 East 7th St. (at corner of 3rd Ave.),
Manhattan • 5:30–9:30 p.m.

to the board, "Show us your tax returns, you goddamn crooks."

As the shouting reached a crescendo, both Lubell and Markus approached tenant representative Adriene Holder and emphatically poked their fingers at her in an apparent plea for her to control her constituency. Lubell's proposal, for increases of 6 and 9 percent and a revival of the "poor tax" surcharge on low-rent apartments, was voted down 7-2.

The two tenant representatives, Holder and David Pagan, proposed a two-year rent freeze and jeers turned to cheers. "This year, it needs to be about tenants and affordability. Enough is enough," said Holder, noting that one-third of New York City renters pay at least half their income for housing. As usual, it was summarily voted down 7-2 as well.

"It's terrible, we're just going through the same thing as last year and nothing has changed," said Madelin Camporeate, a member of Tenants and Neighbors.

Markus, whom tenants often call "Marvin Markup," then proposed a "compromise," a range of possible increases stretching from somewhat less to slightly more than last year's guidelines of 3.5 and 6.5 percent. The board approved it without debate and then took a recess.

The crowd calmed itself by milling around and socializing in the lobby. Older Jewish women in brightly colored hats that read "stronger rent laws now" mixed easily with younger African-Americans and homeless people.

"Excuse the nasal piece," said long-time East Side Tenants' Coalition activist Dawn Sullivan, who breathes with the aid of an oxygen tank. "We have so many people who can't keep up with these increases. Even people in the arts can't come here anymore."

As the crowd left the building, a group of gender-bending drag queens was throwing a party and photo exhibition in another lobby. "Give me a five,

honey," fandango attendee Giorgio Handman, clad in a fedora and suspenders, called to the tenants who spilled into the space.

Both landlord representatives sheepishly wandered into the lobby to take the elevator. A younger black tenant began to dance and moaned "so hot, hot" as two leggy drag queens in boots with mini-handcuffs for laces passed by.

Bennett Baumer is an organizer with Met Council on Housing.

the people's lawyer

Busted!

Nation cheers as lawyers, videographers catch NYPD lying and the DA-doctored video

BY ANN SCHNEIDER

The patient work of videographer Eileen Clancy of I-Witness Video, led last month to proof that someone in the District Attorney's office edited a video of Alexander Dunlop, who was arrested as he was going to get sushi. Dunlop was charged with pushing his bicycle into a line of cops and resisting arrest. Portions of the video that contradicted these charges were deleted from the video that the DA turned over to defense lawyers.

This followed proof in a December trial that Officer Matthew Wohl manufactured testimony when he claimed to have arrested a squirming, screaming Dennis Kyne at the RNC. Actual video of the arrest showed Kyne was cooperative with his arresting officer, who, incidentally, was not Wohl.

A 1963 U.S. Supreme Court case, *Brady v. Maryland*, requires the prosecution to turn over exculpatory material in its possession to the defendant. If a failure to do so is somehow discovered later, the conviction must be overturned.

But what are the consequences for an officer or assistant district attorney who is caught testifying or thwarting *Brady's* mandates?

The incidents made national news, thanks to reporter Jim Dwyer, who broke the story in the *New York Times* on April 12th. The disclosures seemed to have immediate and dramatic effect, specifically upon DA Robert Morgenthau's office.

One beneficiary was Julia Cohen, an NLG legal observer who was arrested at the August 26 Critical Mass bike ride, despite her green hat. Her trial was scheduled to commence on April 14, two days after the *New York Times* story.

But on the morning of her trial, Assistant District Attorney Zachary Johnson walked into the courtroom and declared, "We have 30 to 50 additional videotapes for the defense." He offered to make them available for copying (at Cohen's expense), provided Cohen agree to adjourn the case.

Cohen received a total of 53 additional videotapes. The ADA had previously told the court it turned over all relevant material when it released three tapes to the defense. No explanation was offered.

Cohen's trial ended in acquittal on May 10.

A spokeswoman for the Manhattan District Attorney's office, Barbara Thompson, said she was unaware of any change in the practice of turning over exculpatory material since April 12. "We turn over whatever is required by law. Whatever should be turned over, is turned over."

When Dwyer's story hit the *New York Times*, readers from as far away as California wrote letters to the editor expressing their outrage. Jerrold Nadler and the Congressional Black Caucus called upon Alberto Gonzales to investigate a "pattern and practice" of prosecutorial misconduct. DA Morgenthau and Mayor Bloomberg have yet to respond to these calls.

In order to restore public faith in the evenhandedness of the law, the DA must be more forthcoming about who was involved in editing the Dunlop videotape. The DA said it began an investigation into the perjury of Officer Wohl in January. Those results must be released.

Otherwise, it will remain historically true that no prosecutor in any jurisdiction has ever been significantly punished for his or her collaboration in obtaining a false conviction.

The People's Lawyer is a project of the Nat'l Lawyers Guild, NYC Chapter. Contact the chapter at www.nlgnyc.org or at (212) 679-6018.

Rites of Spring

MAY DAY: Workers and their supporters in Bushwick march down Knickerbocker Ave. on May 1 demanding local stores follow labor laws that protect the rights of employees.

PHOTO: KAREN OH



EARTH DAY: Lyneisha Winston, Kayla Jenkins and Laura Alba from PS179 in the South Bronx, helped dig holes and plant trees in Brook Park in honor of Earth Day. Here they discover a gigantic earthworm.

PHOTO: ANTRIM CASKEY





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RELIGIOUS PROGRESSIVES TAKE ON THE CHRISTIAN FAR RIGHT

Backwards Christian Soldiers



BY SUSAN CHENELLE

Less than a week after religious conservatives held "Justice Sunday," a nationally televised rally featuring Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist, more than 500 activists, academics, clergy, journalists and other concerned individuals gathered at CUNY Graduate Center for a conference co-sponsored by the New York Open Center called "Examining the Real Agenda of the Religious Far Right."

On April 29 and 30, presenters offered insights into the rise of the Christian far right, explanations of its agenda and ideas on how to organize against it.

The current battle over federal court nominees, as Chip Berlet of Political Research Associates told *The Indypendent*, "will seem like mild-mannered, civil discourse" when a Supreme Court justice retires. The religious right, he said, "Started planning to take over the Republican Party 30 years ago. They're ready. If they get to appoint Supreme Court justices, they can control the direction of a lot of policy for the next 20 years."

Frederick Clarkson, an independent journalist, explained in his presentation that, during his 1991 undercover investigation of the Christian Coalition, he observed that the group had decided to become a "values-based electoral organization, working within the Republican Party, but not *of* the party." They began "building for power," working across election cycles, becoming organized about organizing and thinking long-term. "Nobody else does this," he argued.

To combat these trends, Clarkson urged progressives to reclaim not only faith, but

history and citizenship as well. Far right Christian leaders often claim that the United States was founded as a Christian nation and that liberals and their "activist" judges thwart the will of the founding fathers by allowing things like abortion and same-sex marriage. Not so, says Clarkson. When the framers of the Constitution gathered, they were faced with the challenge of creating a nation out of 13 Christian theocracies, each with its own denomination with other sects outlawed. To do so they made the radical decision to separate church and state. This outraged many religious leaders. "The Christian right didn't like the Constitution when it was written," said Clarkson, "and they don't like it now."

Though many conference speakers denounced the right's claim to represent all people of faith, several identified the perceived disdain for religion on the part of much of the left as a significant obstacle in organizing against the right's march toward dominion.

Berlet insisted on the importance of not labeling and lumping together all religious people. He chided the left for using meaningless, inflammatory terms like "religious political extremists," noting that they alienated many religious people. However, he didn't simply call upon the left to watch its language; in order to reach the religious people with relatively progressive social values, Berlet said, the secular left must think about what attracts people to religion and what they get from it. Progressives must also take the right's demands and concerns seriously, he argued, and confront them head-on, directly challenging the morals of

conservative policies on issues like health care and welfare, and their outcomes.

The term Dominionism itself, Berlet said, "gets away from the kind of labeling that tends to treat Christian Conservatives like they're either stupid or crazy. Dominion is what they want. It's what most political movements want. But in the sense of biblical passages, it's related to the text in Genesis, which they understand to mean that they should get to run things."

Clarkson echoed the idea: "The most mobilized force in our democracy is dedicated to ending it. If we don't know how to elect officials, we are ceding the turf to those who do. The scariest thing is not the agenda of the Christian right. The scariest thing is that we have to change."

The concluding panel discussion, titled "Where Do We Go From Here?" reflected this ambivalence. While some called for a mass occupation of Washington, D.C. if the Senate should do away with the filibuster, others stressed the need to find ways to dialogue with religious middle America.

NYU professor and author of *The Bush Dyslexicon* Mark Crispin Miller called for a revival of the "sense of the common good" that has become so denigrated by the twin assault by the Christian and capitalist right. Miller acknowledged that it's going to require a lot of hard work and a "recommitment to democracy," but he insisted, "If you believe in it, you can win."

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ONE REASON TO TAKE DOMINIONISM SERIOUSLY

The ill-named Constitution Restoration Act of 2005 is a prime example of the Dominionist intent to remake the Constitution in the bible's image. The bill declares that, "The Supreme Court shall not have jurisdiction to review, by appeal, writ of certiorari, or otherwise, any matter to the extent that relief is sought against an entity of Federal, State, or local government, or against an officer or agent of Federal, State, or local government (whether or not acting in official or personal capacity), concerning that entity's, officer's, or agent's acknowledgment of God as the sovereign source of law, liberty, or government." In plain English, the bill would enshrine religious beliefs above the Constitution. Previously introduced in 2004, it was reintroduced in the House (H.R. 1070) and Senate (S.520) on March 3, and has been referred to the two legislative bodies' respective judiciary committees.

If enacted, this provision would attempt to prevent judicial review by the Supreme Court of any decision by any government official or agent made based on his or her religious beliefs. It currently has five co-sponsors in the Senate and 30 in the House. Though its supporters claim that the bill is simply meant to apply to cases like the display of the Ten Commandments or a Nativity scene in a government building, it is so broadly worded that, as Katherine Yurica notes on Yuricareport.com, "if it becomes law, [it] may allow any judge to institute biblical punishments without being subject to review by the Supreme Court or the federal court system."

WHAT DRIVES THE CHRISTIAN FAR RIGHT

Dominionism

"A trend in Protestant evangelicism and fundamentalism that encourages not just active political participation in civic society but also attempts to dominate the political process."

— Chip Berlet

Reconstructionism

"Seeks to replace democracy with a theocratic elite that would govern by imposing their interpretation of 'Biblical Law.'"

— Frederick Clarkson

Surviving the Bomb

BY JOHN TARLETON / PHOTOS BY ANTRIM CASKEY



SUNAO TSUBOI IS A DIFFERENT KIND OF WAR MEMORIAL — ONE MADE OF FLESH AND BLOOD.

Standing in front of a picture of himself as a young man charred to a crisp by the atomic bomb that exploded over Hiroshima 60 years ago this summer, Tsuboi, 80, recently explained why he traveled to New York for this month's marathon negotiations at the United Nations over the fate of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

"I came because nobody deserves a life like I had," he said. "We had to carry the pain for our entire lives."

Tsuboi, co-chairman of Hidankyo, a confederation of Japanese A-bomb survivors, was one of the first people in Japan to break the official silence about the plight of A-bomb survivors who continue to suffer high rates of cancer decades after atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945. Over the years, he has endured heart disease, chronic anemia and cancer of the large intestine, part of which he had removed eight years ago. He was most recently in the hospital in mid-April.

Tsuboi joined about three dozen other aging survivors (or "hibakusha") of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings who traveled to New York at the beginning of this month to try and put a human face on the momentous yet seemingly arcane issue of nuclear weapons proliferation.

The hibakusha, many of whom are ill, fanned out across the city for several days to speak about nuclear disarmament at local high schools and universities, at churches, Buddhist temples, diplomatic receptions and a May Day peace rally at Central Park.

SUNAO TSUBOI was 1.2 kilometers from Ground Zero when the U.S. bombed Hiroshima. Most of his body was severely burned. "The doctors told me on a daily basis that I would surely die," he says.

ment at local high schools and universities, at churches, Buddhist temples, diplomatic receptions and a May Day peace rally at Central Park.

When I found Tsuboi and some of the other A-bomb survivors, they stood in front of a small exhibit in the first-floor lobby of the United Nations building, taking turns speaking with curious passers-by. In spite (or perhaps because) of their suffering, they were free of anger or bitterness. They had consciously chosen to become the peace they wish to see in the world.

"The person who overcomes hell becomes kind to other people," Tsuboi explained. "It's the people who don't smile who haven't suffered enough."

"Their modesty is so amazing. They never come to accuse anyone," added Magumi Hill, 43, a volunteer translator.

Meanwhile, diplomats from around the world were locked behind closed doors unable to even agree on an agenda. Tsuboi was clear about what they should be discussing.

"This evil thing [nuclear weapons] must be destroyed by human beings," Tsuboi said. "We all have different political and economic systems, but we must come together to solve this problem. We must have a dialogue even if it takes a very long time. Only then will we find peace."

MIYOKO YAMADA is one of at least three dozen a-bomb survivors who have brought their pleas for peace and the end to all nuclear weapons to the U.N.



for more about Hiroshima, see page 10-11



NPT DEADLOCK

The Nuclear Winter of our Discontent

BY DONALD PANETH

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y. — The most important nuclear disarmament conference in decades can't get started because the U.S. and Iran won't agree to an agenda. And should the conference fail, the nuclear impasse will become much, much worse very soon. Nuclear weapons will run wild, and nobody will like it.

"I'm very worried about the course of the NPT review conference," Congressman Edward Markey (D-MA) told a May 9 press conference at the U.N. "The whole NPT regime could just die, and lead to nuclear escalation. That's why I'm here."

Joseph Gerson, author of *With Hiroshima Eyes* and *The Deadly Connection*, forecast that the conference would end in "a train wreck."

Rhianna Tyson, head of Reaching Critical Will, a project of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, said that she didn't expect much to be accomplished.

Every five years, an NPT review conference takes up the status of the treaty. At the last NPT review conference in 2000, 13 Practical Steps were adopted to realize the principal NPT aims. None of the steps has been taken.

The current review conference runs through May 27.

The difficulties with the treaty and the questions it presents are enormous, complex, and dangerous. One of the troubles is public ignorance and indifference to not only the NPT but to nuclear weapons.

Right now, the U.S. mass media are not providing the American public with an accurate appraisal of the treaty, the information needed to understand it. They are blacking out the desper-

ate, frightening nature of the nuclear arms race, U.S. nuclear policy, and the failure of nuclear disarmament measures.

Though nuclear weapons experts such as Dr. Helen Caldicott, Robert Jay Lifton and Jonathan Schell, along with many others, have spoken out forcefully about the increasing threats of nuclear war, their views have not been widely distributed — and they certainly have gone unheeded.

HELEN CALDICOTT
ESTIMATES THAT THE
WORLD HAS FIVE YEARS
TO NEGOTIATE ITS WAY
OUT OF THE NUCLEAR
WEAPONS CRISIS.

Speaking May 2 at the CUNY Graduate Center, Caldicott estimated that the world has five years to negotiate its way out of the nuclear weapons crisis.

The public has not responded to this crisis, as it did during the nuclear freeze campaign of the 1980s.

A scant 4,000 to 5,000 people showed up in Central Park on May 1 for a "No nukes, no wars" rally.

The following day, the NPT review conference opened. The atmosphere at the U.N. was hectic. Journalists arrived from across the world to cover it. Aging Japanese survivors of the

1945 U.S. atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were present (See related story).

The likely scuttling of the NPT reflects the Bush administration's aversion to international treaties or negotiations, for example, its withdrawal from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty and its refusal to re-submit the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty for Senate ratification.

A high-ranking U.N. official pointed out that the U.S. was trying to push "some sort of tough stance" at the NPT conference.

That stance was evident as this report was being written: the U.S. was objecting to the inclusion of an agenda item for the discussion of whether previous NPT agreements should be reaffirmed. Its adversary, Iran, was insisting that the issue of uranium enrichment and plutonium reprocessing not be discussed. Enrichment and reprocessing can not only be used to fuel nuclear reactors for energy production, but can produce the fissile material necessary to make nuclear bombs.

The U.S.-Iran conflict relates to the fundamental issue presented by Article VI of the NPT. The article refers to a "bargain" in which nuclear powers would pursue measures to end the nuclear arms race and eventually eliminate all nuclear weapons.

In return, non-nuclear-weapons states committed themselves not to develop nuclear arms. The nuclear powers also agreed to provide other nations with nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.

Led by Washington, the nuclear powers have refused to fulfill their part of the bargain. Instead, they have continued to increase the size and destructive capacity of their nuclear arsenals.

Clear & Present Danger

BY A.K. GUPTA

While many people think nuclear power's hey-day has passed, its presence in our lives is more pervasive than ever, posing numerous dangers.

MELTDOWNS

Partial meltdowns have occurred at nuclear plants in Canada, England and at least three facilities in the United States, including Three Mile Island in 1979. Despite assurances from the nuclear power industry that safety has been strengthened in the wake of these disasters, many critics note that hundreds of plants around the world continue to operate well past their life expectancy, raising the risk of future accidents.

DEPLETED URANIUM

DU is a by-product of nuclear power generation. The U.S. Department of Energy has a stockpile of 704,000 tons of depleted uranium hexafluoride and literally gives it away to weapons manufacturers to encourage its disposal. DU is prized as a weapon for its density, "self-sharpening" and fire-starting properties. It also pulverizes to dust upon impact, leaving behind a toxic residue. At least 300 tons of DU munitions were expended during the first Gulf War, and the U.S. military continues to use it in Iraq today. DU is thought to be a contributor to Gulf War Syndrome, which has affected hundreds of thousands of U.S. military personnel.

NUCLEAR WASTE

Despite more than 50 years of operation, the nuclear power industry has not found any reliable way to dispose of nuclear waste. In the United States, more than 45,000 tons of high-level waste has been produced, nearly all of it stored in dry casks or cooling pools on site at reactors where they are vulnerable to accidents or attacks.

YUCCA MOUNTAIN

To dispose of high-level nuclear waste, the U.S. government is proposing a "permanent" dump on Western Shoshone Indian land at Yucca Mountain in Nevada — less than 100 miles away from Las Vegas. Despite almost two decades of testing and preparation, the facility has proven to be unsuitable. It is crisscrossed by fault lines and is in a seismically active area. Fractures in the rock would allow radiation to quickly spread into the water table beneath the proposed dump. There's also a small engineering problem. The facility would have to contain the radioactive waste for hundreds of thousands of years, but there is no way to even test the suitability of any design for such a long time scale.

IRRADIATION

The nuclear power industry offers "irradiation" as a solution to a hazardous commercial food industry. This is achieved through a variety of methods, including exposing food to radioactive waste. Given that most people don't want to eat food bombarded by radioactive sludge, proponents of irradiation have relabeled it cold or electronic pasteurization. Irradiation is used to kill bacteria that cause food poisoning and spoilage and to prolong shelf life. Irradiation does not sterilize feces, pus or blood that may be present. Radiation doesn't distinguish between good and bad bacteria. It kills many beneficial enzymes, depletes vitamins and produces known carcinogens such as formaldehyde and benzene, and a new and largely unstudied class of compounds known as "Unique Radiolytic Products." Labeling regulations only require the presence of a feel-good "radura" symbol on irradiated products.



Labeling regulations only require the presence of a feel-good "radura" symbol on irradiated products.

A high-ranking U.N. official pointed out that the U.S. was trying to push "some sort of tough stance" at the NPT conference.

That stance was evident as this report was being written: the U.S. was objecting to the inclusion of an agenda item for the discussion of whether previous NPT agreements should be reaffirmed. Its adversary, Iran, was insisting that the issue of uranium enrichment and plutonium reprocessing not be discussed. Enrichment and reprocessing can not only be used to fuel nuclear reactors for energy production, but can produce the fissile material necessary to make nuclear bombs.

The U.S.-Iran conflict relates to the fundamental issue presented by Article VI of the NPT. The article refers to a "bargain" in which nuclear powers would pursue measures to end the nuclear arms race and eventually eliminate all nuclear weapons.

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Getting to Zero

BY ALICE SLATER

On May 1, thousands of people, including atomic bomb survivors from Hiroshima and Nagasaki, marched on the United Nations demanding that the world's nuclear powers, meeting to review the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), begin negotiations for a treaty to eliminate nuclear weapons.

In the 1970 NPT, the United States, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, China and France promised to give up their nuclear weapons if the other countries in the world promised not to acquire them. (Israel, India, and Pakistan never signed the treaty, though they possess nuclear weapons.)

In 1986, Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev called for the abolition of nuclear weapons by the year 2000, but backed off when U.S. President Reagan called for continuing the development of anti-missile systems dubbed Star Wars. Later, Russian President Putin offered to cut his nuclear arsenal to 1,000 if the U.S. would match him, but pulled his offer off the table as the U.S. insisted on funding programs to militarize outer space.

What is now needed is for the U.S. and Russia to cut their massive arsenals to 1,000 weapons each, and then call all the other nuclear weapons states to begin talks to eliminate the estimated 30,000 existing nuclear weapons worldwide, under strict and effective international controls.

Although a rocket scientist is needed to build a nuclear weapons arsenal, abolishing nuclear weapons is a matter of good sense, good housekeeping, and appropriate verification and monitoring measures. Scientists, lawyers and policy makers have already produced a model nuclear weapons treaty that sets forth the practical steps for dismantling arsenals, securing materials and setting up monitoring and verification procedures.

We know this works from our experience after the first Gulf War when U.N. inspectors accurately certified that Iraq was nuclear-weapons free.

An agreement to prevent space weaponization would have to be part of the deal, as would the creation of a Sustainable Energy Agency to enable us to phase out peaceful nuclear power, guaranteed as an inalienable right under the NPT to sweeten the bargain made with the non-nuclear weapons states to keep them from acquiring nuclear weapons. Since every nuclear power plant is a potential bomb factory, we need to shift our reliance to the sun, the wind and the tides for our energy needs.

A recent AP poll found that two-thirds of all Americans believe that no country, not even the United States should possess nuclear weapons. In April, Gorbachev stated that he believes Russia is ready to cooperate on a joint effort to abolish nuclear weapons worldwide. And the Belgian Senate recently voted to require that North Atlantic Treaty Organization nuclear missiles be removed from Belgian soil.

The withdrawal of North Korea from the NPT and the standoff with Iran about its desire to reprocess plutonium for peaceful civilian use may provide the greatest impetus for genuine nuclear disarmament. As the United States tries to mount diplomatic pressure against Iran's allegedly peaceful nuclear energy program, it faces increased criticism over its own NPT obligations and its failure to meet them.

If enough international pressure could be brought to bear, U.S. public opinion might respond by convincing their government that the best strategy for ending nuclear proliferation is the abolition of nuclear weapons, including its own.

Alice Slater is the president of the Global Resource Action Center for the Environment (GRACE).

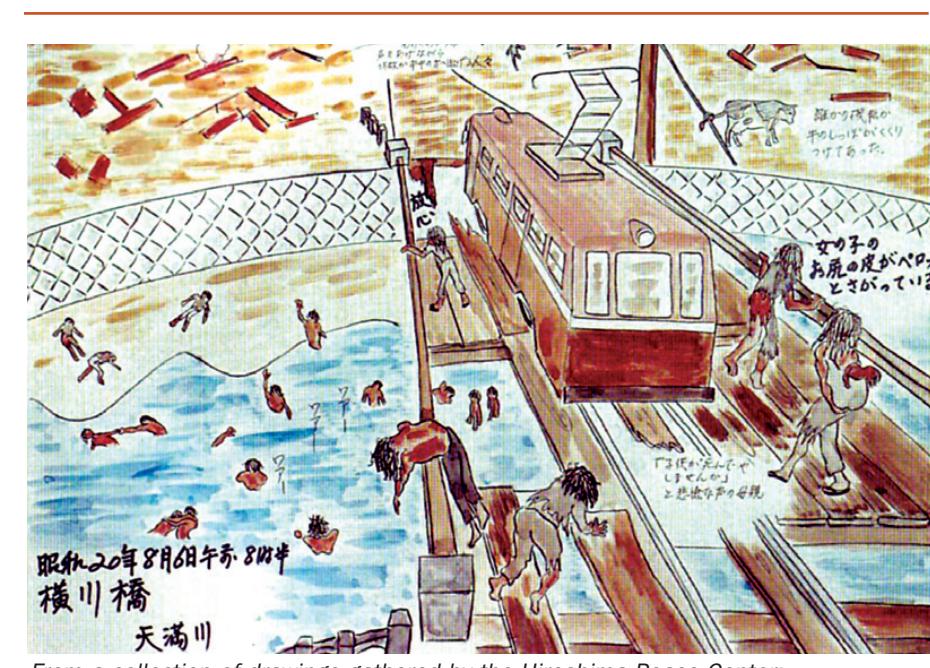
Mid East Nukes

In U.S. government assessments about nuclear weapons in the Middle East, one country is conspicuously absent — Israel. Since 1949, Israel has pursued a nuclear-weapons program and, according to a 1999 analysis by the U.S. Air War College, possesses more than 400 warheads as well as medium-range missiles that can hit any country in the region. Israel also achieved notoriety for helping South Africa's apartheid regime develop nukes in the 1970s.

Iraq was years away from a bomb when Israeli jets demolished the Osirik reactor in 1981. Egypt argues that other Middle East nations have a right to acquire nuclear weapons to counter the Israeli threat, but it has not made significant efforts to acquire nuclear weapons. Libya gave up its weapons of mass destruction programs last year in exchange for improved ties with Western countries.

Iran nuclear ambitions appear to be motivated by the Bush administration's "war on terror." Since the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan in October 2001, Iran has been surrounded steadily by American military forces and bases. Thus Iran has decided to accelerate development of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles as a deterrent. It's thought that the earliest Iran will have enough fissile material for a bomb will be 2006.

—AK GUPTA



From a collection of drawings gathered by the Hiroshima Peace Center: "Yokogawa Bridge over Tenma River, August 6, 1945, 8:30am. People, crying and moaning, were running toward the city. I did not know why."

MEXICAN DEMOCRACY 1 EL PRESIDENTE 0

BY JENNIFER WHITNEY

MEXICO CITY – New developments in Mexico leave the country poised to join Latin America's shift to the left. The federal government announced on May 4 that it would cease its attempt to prosecute Andrés Manuel López Obrador, the populist mayor of Mexico City, clearing the way for his presidential bid next year. A week earlier, President Vicente Fox sacked Attorney General Rafael Macedo, who was perceived as leading the charge against the mayor. With Macedo pegged as the fall guy, Fox proposed new legislation that would radically overhaul the criminal justice system, affecting López Obrador and almost half of the nearly 200,000 Mexicans currently incarcerated. Additionally, Congress has passed a law allowing Mexican nationals living abroad to vote.

The complete reversal in policy came less than two weeks after 1.2 million people responded to López Obrador's call for a peaceful march in the capital. Some marchers are sworn opponents of López Obrador, yet felt it necessary to support a fair electoral process.

Walking silently, wearing white masks over their faces, they carried signs calling for democracy. Many view the minor criminal charges against the presidential frontrunner as being less about justice and

more about eliminating him from the race.

Days after the march, Fox, who for months has engaged in a war of words with López Obrador, appeared to have second thoughts. "My government will not prevent anyone from taking part in the next federal election," he said in an address to the nation. The Fox administration seems surprised by the steady growth of support for the mayor, whose sweeping reforms and daily press conferences have him leading in the polls by a wide majority, and still climbing. "He seems unbeatable at this point," said political analyst Federico Estevez after last week's announcement.

Fox is associated with a breakthrough in the struggle toward greater democracy, since his National Action Party (PAN) electoral victory in 2000 ended the 71-year reign of the former ruling party. His maneuverings against the mayor, which included allegedly ordering the directors of the nation's largest television stations to suppress coverage of López Obrador, led many to question his motives. Eliminating a candidate for what are widely considered to be political motives would tarnish his pro-democracy legacy.

It remains to be seen what will happen with the proposed law, which would grant rights to all persons accused of a crime. Currently, the Mexican judicial system treats suspects as guilty until proven innocent, holding many in jail until legal proceedings conclude. Bail is denied regularly, or is prohibitively expensive. Since there is no right to a speedy trial, innocent people and petty criminals can spend over a year in jail before a verdict. It is this anomaly that would have kept López Obrador out of the presidential race – one cannot run for office while under investigation for a crime.

According to the International Center for Prison Studies, 43 percent of Mexico's prison population awaits trial. As activist and musician Roco put it, "If this law passes it would be almost revolutionary – imagine – an exodus of people from the jails." Such an exodus would surely only add to the momentum behind López Obrador's sprint toward the presidency.

BY LEANNE TORY-MURPHY

PUTLA, MEXICO—On the road to this small town in the mountains of the southern Mexican state of Oaxaca, graffiti demanding indigenous rights and autonomy competes with government propaganda murals. The Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) has had an iron grip on the state's politics for more than 80 years, and the murals' faded colors look like they haven't been repainted in decades, except for a name: Ulises Ruiz Ortiz.

The administration of Ortiz, who became governor of Oaxaca three months ago, has attracted international attention for "violent suppression of protests, for its imprisonment and murder of dissidents, for its manipulation of justice and for the numerous ways it has abused human rights, immigrating and terrorizing its indigenous population to serve the interests of foreign capital and PRI political bosses," writes *Noticias*, the state's most popular daily. In Putla, one of the first areas to organize itself through the Committee Organized in Defense of the Rights of the People (CODEP), the problems are particularly acute.

Off a dirt road is a cement basketball court surrounded by lush mountains. A huge crowd waits there: men on one side, women on the other, kids running all around. I naively think that school has gotten out for the day; then I see a table adorned with a red cloth and vases of vibrantly colored flowers and three chairs behind it, facing an audience of more than a hundred plastic chairs. This is our reception. We begin to talk, our discussion translated between Mixteco and Spanish.

INDIGENOUS HARDSHIPS

The injustices in the lives of the indigenous are systemic. There is minimal access to medical care. They have to wait days for treatment in a badly equipped hospital, hours away. Newborns are often disabled, or stillborn. The ones that live walk three hours to school, or can't go because they are needed in the fields or they can't afford uniforms. The uneven, rocky roads are impassable half of the year, rivers flood and there are no bridges. The one pay phone serving this remote mountain town of 500 people doesn't work most of the time.

The disempowering poverty is maintained by an almost feudal system of *caciques*, PRI-connected middlemen who dominate entire industries and pay the farmers next to nothing while reaping huge profits by selling abroad. The campesinos generally earn slightly more than a dollar per day. They "are at the base of the economic system. We can't compete," says a man with a degree in economics. "My son goes to school, he needs to pay, needs a uniform; it's not necessary. The teachers don't understand; if you need to pay, the

Since Ulises Ortiz became governor, 39 indigenous political prisoners have been incarcerated in Oaxaca. Since 1998, 10 activists have been killed in Putla alone, either in car accidents or shot by assassins hired by the local cacique. "They will use all the structure that they have – transportation, the police, the justice system, military groups, etc. – to fight independent social organizations," said Señor Marcos, a CODEP representative for Putla.

ZAPATISTA IDEALS

The Zapatista uprising in 1994 breathed life into initiatives for unity in independent social organizing. Other than a small,



now-dormant armed contingent called the Ejército Popular Revolucionario, Oaxaca's organizations tend to resemble the Zapatistas more in ideology than in tactics. In Oaxaca, the villages are organizing from varied and distinct locales, building a strong political network by allying with other groups in the state and in the country, as well as internationally.

Low income Mexicans, especially southerners who are more likely to be indigenous are confronting the same colonial pressures of corporate globalization through free-trade agreements like the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) and Plan Pueblo Panama (PPP), and they have developed a fierce solidarity in responding to the threat.

Multinationals working through President Vicente Fox, the former CEO of Coca-Cola, openly seek to exploit the rich and varied natural resources of rural Mexico. Aside from sheer economic subjugation, the indigenous peoples contend with the destruction of their culture, languages, ancestral lands, religious practices and laws.

While there is a strong desire to maintain the life of the villages and to reduce emigration to the United States, emigration is one of the few economic avenues available for survival. This leaves behind debilitated communities, broken families and virtual ghost towns where maybe 80 out of 200 houses are occupied – often only by women and children. That is the price exacted for survival under capitalism. "Thanks to the people who have emigrated, we have the little that there is," said one from a community of 400 people.

Social organizing and the inspiration of seeing their strength when they come together in manifestations in the capital have sparked hope and a sense of purpose. As our Mixteco translator explained, "We know, we believe and we trust that another form of organization will liberate us and this is what we work for. With our transparent democracy, we can go farther than dreaming."

"The government is trying to break us, but we will not permit it."

—Praulia Lopez

indigenous will not go." And, he adds, "if they study architecture, engineering, etc., they can't get a job anyway. They end up selling tickets for buses or working in the fields."

Transportation and the roads are a major problem. Although there is very little villages can do about the roads without material support, the people have taken transport into their own hands.

In 1991, 24 of the communities organized through CODEP a taxi project to provide transportation services as an independent social organization. Although drivers pay monthly fees for their cars – as opposed to being granted cars as PRI gifts – they maintain their autonomy while earning a living.

Several prominent CODEP members have been killed in mysterious "traffic accidents." Organization members call these assassinations. "The government is trying to break us, but we will not permit it," says Praulia Lopez, one of the few female drivers, whose husband, Felix, was a prominent organizer and an early casualty. The "accidents," she adds, "practically started the revolution in Putla."

"...imagine – an exodus of people from the jails."

—Roco, musician and activist

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Generation Adolph

OLD VOLK LIVE GOOD LIFE

BY DERQ QUIGGLE

BOCHUM, Germany—Sixty years after the end of World War II, older Germans are living the good life. To finance luxurious state-based pension plans, they have slowly been bankrupting every other sector of the German government. Pensioners have consistently voted to increase their own pension payouts and at the same time decrease their taxes, shifting the burden to younger and poorer German workers.

From where does the selfishness of the current pensioner generation derive? Their quality-of-life expectations were set, as the renowned historian Götz Aly, argues in his study *Hitler's Volkstaat* (Hilter's People's Nation), by Adolph Hitler during the Third Reich.

Aly successfully argues that 95 percent of Germans loved Hitler because he radically and steadily improved the quality of their lives, as measured by material affluence, educational opportunities, meaningful employment and participation in local political decision-making processes. (Of course, after the Communists, Socialists Jews, trade unionists and other "troublemakers" had been detained in concentration camps).

NAZI BOOTY GRABBING

Despite his massive war machine, Hitler never once raised taxes. In fact, he continuously lowered taxes throughout his dictatorship. He established, as Aly makes clear, the most extensive and opportunity-rich socialist state ever invented within the Occident. He financed his social state by plundering first, Germany's internal Jewry, and thereafter, by plundering all available wealth in the countries the Reich invaded: Poland, Hungary, France, etc., Viking style. One reason Germans bombed targeted countries so sparingly and instead relied on foot soldiers and tanks is precisely because Hitler wanted to preserve potential booty from destruction. He literally could not afford to aerial bomb his victims. The riches of the invaded countries were gathered together by Nazi soldiers and systematically shipped home — not only bank accounts, jewelry and gold — but furniture, automobiles, appliances and foodstuffs. Anything that could be transported was sent back to the workers in the Fatherland.

Up to the very end of the war, Germans experienced a steadily rising standard of living, despite massive Allied bombing campaigns. Aly points out the large number of supposedly "bombed-out" Germans who emerged from the war rich enough to start up

small industrial ventures. Material wealth had been well hidden in bomb-safe cellars and bunkers. Under the auspices of the Marshall Plan and protected during the Cold War by the U.S. nuclear umbrella, "ex-Nazis" rebuilt their country with astonishing swiftness. Within five years, West Germany was already beginning to assert its former economic might across Europe. And the German social state emerged from the ashes like a phoenix.

HITLER'S YOUTH REVOLUTION

Aly makes quite lucid how Hitler wooed and seduced young Germans at the outset of his political career. To be young then was heaven. The Third Reich was largely the result of a Youth Revolution. Never before had any European nation offered so many educational and career opportunities to its young. For members of the German Volk, the Nazi state represented an admirably flexible meritocracy that rewarded diligence and talent alike, according to Aly. The reason so few German historians have been willing to admit this undeniable fact, despite the overwhelming evidence Aly has gathered together, is because it brings up seriously disturbing questions about the so-called remorse of the post-war generation. Even while they were bemoaning the catastrophe of the Third Reich, they were continuing to fulfill precisely the same set of quality-of-life expectations Hitler himself had created. If this generation refused to adjust their consuming desires, how authentic could their penance have been?

The youth revolution of the Third Reich did not disappear; it just got older. Numerous popular novels, feature-length films and TV documentaries now promote

nostalgia for the good old days of the Nuremberg Rallies, when German workers were de-alienated from the product of their labor and made to feel that building tanks and guns was a transcendent religious calling. The Nazi generation continues to plunder "others" in order to finance its lifestyle. But today, it's not Polish Jews or French Normans who are paying the bills of the Nazi generation; it's Germans under the age of 40, the first generation in the history of German civilization whose lifestyle will not supersede its parents. Should it be surprising these younger generations are refusing to procreate? The birth rate continues to sink further and further below the mortality rate. Nazi plundering has come full circle.

The Germans of the Nazi Youth Revolution have never called the 8th of May a day of liberation, instead regarding it as a day of German capitulation, a term used more and more frequently in the mainstream media to describe this month's anniversary. It seems inaccurate to use either "liberation" or "capitulation" to describe the 8th of May. Given the fact this dying generation of "ex-Nazis" enjoyed, post-War, a nearly totally Jewish-free Germany along with a standard of living utterly unknown to most peoples of Europe before or since, it's difficult to conclude that Hitler and his Volkstaat actually lost the war.

Only now is their bill finally being paid by Germans themselves. And therein lies the irony: Germans under 40 eschew the notion, and rightly, that they share any guilt for the crimes of their grandparents. Yet, it's they who will suffer the economic and social pain that history normally associates with defeated empires.



world in brief

HALLIBURTON BANKS BONUS

Calling Halliburton's work "excellent" and "very good," the U.S. Army has awarded the corporation a \$72 million bonus for providing logistical support in Iraq. The U.S. Army's Award Fee Board in Iraq met in March and it released a press brief May 10 announcing the multi-million dollar bonus. Later in the day, the Army sent out another release stating it had "protected the tax payer first," and explained the phrase was "inadvertently left off" in the earlier brief. Auditors from the Defense Contract Audit Agency have suggested that Halliburton overcharged the armed forces for dining services and investigators are looking into price gauging of fuel supplied to Iraqi civilians. Halliburton, formerly headed by Vice President Dick Cheney, can earn two percent extra from bonuses based on how the Army rates its performance.

BORICUA TUITION HIKE STRIKE

Students at the University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras campus, finished their four-week strike in response to a 33 percent hike in tuition. Striking students said the tuition hikes will price low-income students out of an education. According to the university administration, the rise in costs are necessary because the institution has a \$23.7 million deficit. Preliminary reports made by the student-led University Committee Against The Raise in Tuition show that the financial problems are the result of poor administration, superfluous expenses made by the president's office and an absence of a democratic university system which should include an equal participation of students, professors and employees.

WHEN IN ROME, DON'T DO AS THE NAZIS DO

A public prosecutor from Rome, Salvatore Vitello, charged Indymedia Italy with crimes against the Pope for publishing a photo of him in a Nazi uniform. The official charges are crimes of offense to the Catholic religion and personal offenses to the Pope according to www.indymedia.org. As a child, the former German Cardinal, Joseph Ratzinger, was a member of the Hitler Youth. In the late 1960s Ratzinger embraced an ultra-conservative view of Catholicism as a backlash to church liberals and campus militancy. Using the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith, Ratzinger silenced progressives in the church and enforced a hard line orthodoxy.



MOBILIZE IN PHILADELPHIA on JUNE 18 - 21 FOR BIODEMOCRACY

The world's largest convention of biotech and pharmaceutical executives is coming to Philly this June. Join thousands to resist their closed-door corporate agenda of GE agriculture, health-care-for-profit, and bioweapons proliferations. Give voice to a different vision of local food sovereignty, fair trade, health care for all, community power, biodiversity and honest science.

FESTIVAL Saturday, June 18

Live music, puppets, food, farmer speak-out, plant give-away

TEACH-IN Saturday, June 18 – Monday, June 20

with Ignacio Chapela, Medea Benjamin, Anuradha Mittal, Percy Schmeiser, & many more

WWW.RECLAIMTHECOMMONS.NET • WWW.BIODEV.ORG

DAY OF ACTION Tuesday, June 21

Expose biotech and pharmaceutical hotspots in central Philadelphia.

FOOD NOT BOMBS 25TH ANNIVERSARY GATHERING

GREEN AND BLACK URBAN GATHERING

GET INVOLVED!

Contact Philadelphia RAGE

(Resistance Against Genetic Engineering)

phillyrage@riseup.net

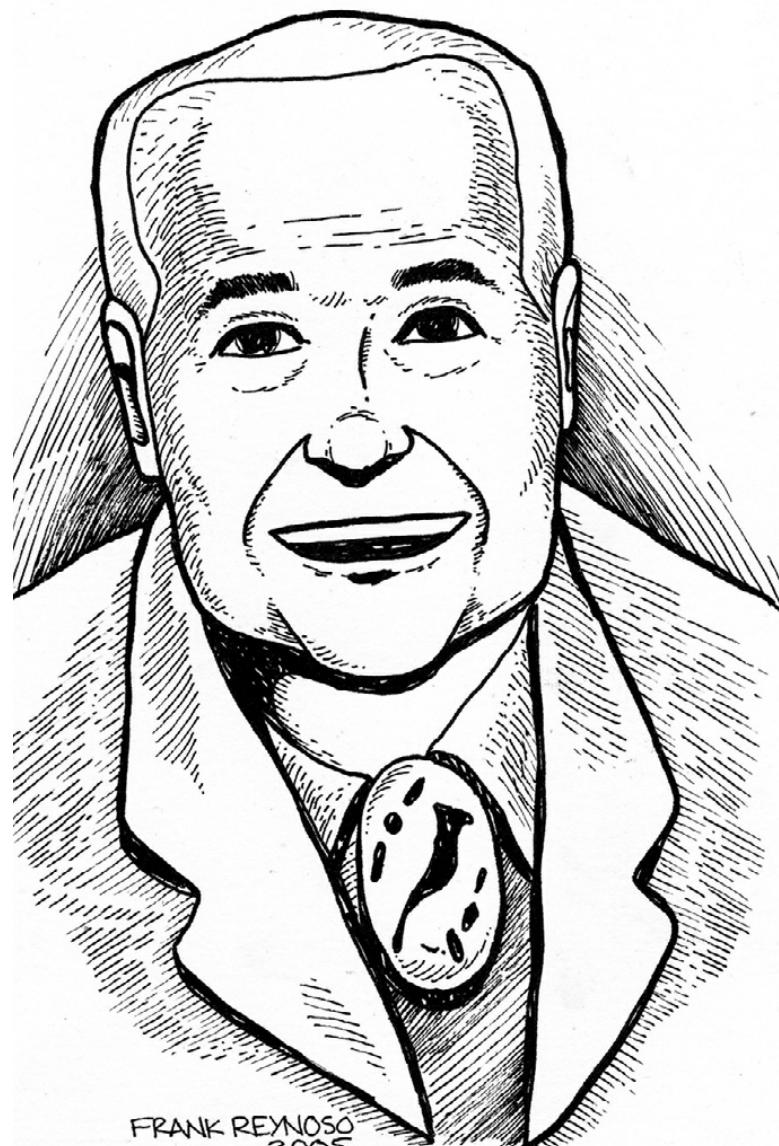
215-222-4711

or leave a message toll-free

877-806-2871

The Coyote Bard Howls

Carter Revard
& Native American Poetics



There's a staggering number of Native American poets whose work embodies a can't-talk-it-down excellence. To mention only the most obvious, Paula Gunn Allen, Joy Harjo, Carter Revard, Louise Erdrich, N. Scott Momaday, Simon Ortiz, Leslie Marmon Silko and Maurice Kenny. Of these poets, it's perhaps Carter Revard's work that reveals tribal patterns of memory with greatest ease to uninitiated readers.

Revard, a member of the Osage Nation that once dominated the prairie plains between the Red Rivers and Missouri, is a professor emeritus at Washington University in St. Louis. Osage tribal rhythms are not so much encoded in his lines as gently pressed into an exquisitely subtle range of sounds detectable only if you slow down and take the time to listen. Some of the titles of Revard's poems hint at the point of this poetry: "Coyote Tells Why He Sings," "Making a Name," "A Song that We Still Sing," "Getting Across," "Spirituality 101: Snakeroot." An abundance of sound in Revard's lines strikes one as being as miraculous as the fact of Beethoven's musical

compositions, and for a similar reason: Revard has been deaf for most of his poetic career. Read "Coyote Tells Why He Sings" out loud:

*There was a little rill of water,
near the den,
That showed a trickle, all the dry
summer
When I born. One night in late
August, it rained –
The Thunder waked us. Drops
came crashing down
In dust, on stiff blackjack leaves,
on lichenized rocks
And the rain came in a pelting
rush down over the hill,
Wind blew wet into our cave as I
heard the sounds
Of leaf-drip, rustling of soggy
branches in gusts of wind.
And then the rill's tune changed –
I heard a rock drop
That set new ripples gurgling, in a
lower key.
Where the new ripples were, I
drank, next morning,
Fresh muddy water that set my
teeth on edge.
I thought how delicate that rock's
poise was and how
The storm made music, when it
changed my world.*

thing external to poetic language. For many Native American poets, poetry serves as a living means of resisting the genocide of the mind that Euro-American culture has been perpetrating on American Indians since before the U.S. government banned the Ghost Dance, an institution that provided defeated Plains Indians a final means of remembering and enacting the sacred rhythms of their scattered tribes.

Native poetry is a form of memory. Indeed, this poetry promises, to the sensitive reader, to reveal essential and enduring forms of tribal memory, not as a replacement but as an extension of ways of remembering. To enter into the forms of Native American poetry is to participate in rhythms once demonized and outlawed and now forgotten or ignored, which alone should make Native poetry compelling to North American radicals.

—DERQ QUIGGLE

Drunk on Punk

SHE'S GOT AN ATOMIC BOMB
DIRECTED BY CIHAN KAAN

She's Got an Atomic Bomb is a hilarious, vivid, kitschy little 20-plus-minute trip of a film. It deals with serious issues, but leaves preachy ideology at home. Amid the film's bright-green mohawked characters, Brooklyn resident extras and cartoonish segues, there is a meaty message – just one that's deep-fried in comedy. It comes through in a style best described as John Waters drunk

Wet Puns of Mass Deconstruction

I'm not sure whether this book is brilliant, annoying or both. *Theater of War*, The *Indydependent* contributor Nicholas Powers' comic exegesis on the semantics of America's post-9/11 imperial politics, is a thicket of Rastafarianesque postmodernist puns, in which "American Idol" a.k.a. the "United Steaks" wages war on "Errorism" in "Aft-Can-I-Stand."

Some of this is very funny, as when Powers defines "Pakistan" as "Pack & Stand Deli": "After 9/11 a paranoid New York became suspicious of Pakistani taxi drivers and deli owners, fearing they were building bombs in between making sandwiches for customers." Other parts are largely incomprehensible: "The great struggles over the Twenty Sense Usury, between libel and total Aryanism ended with the sigh of victims' story for the orifices of freedom – and a single sustainable model for rational sex: read them mar-

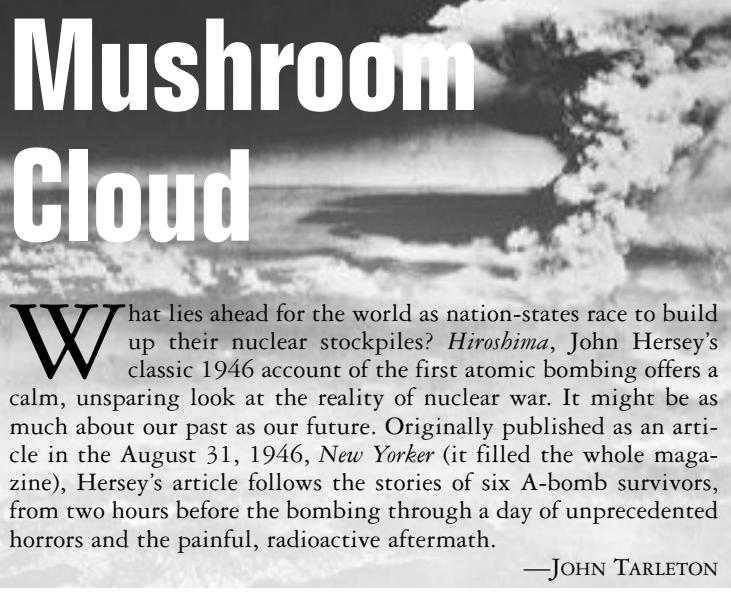
keting pamphlets for free exercise."

Wading through 90 pages of this is not easy. Powers can write and he can feel, as the poems in here show, and his mind takes some fascinating turns, but much of *Theater of War* reads more like a conceptual art project than something you'd sit down with for pleasure or enlightenment.

Powers is on more solid ground when he introduces *Theater of War* in a mock-Broadway playbill, with cast bios like "Muslim Terrorists (The Evil Doers) Debuted as scimitar-wielding shadows in *The Crusades...* Won the Pan Arab Human Firecracker Award for their portrayal of desperation in *The Intifada*," and when he concludes, "The choice isn't between a world of benevolent

Capitalism or Muslim Fanaticism; to reduce our options to those two is false. It's between the freedom of the human imagination or terror of the Other becoming terrorism itself."

—STEVEN WISHNIA



Mushroom Cloud

What lies ahead for the world as nation-states race to build up their nuclear stockpiles? *Hiroshima*, John Hersey's classic 1946 account of the first atomic bombing offers a calm, unsparing look at the reality of nuclear war. It might be as much about our past as our future. Originally published as an article in the August 31, 1946, *New Yorker* (it filled the whole magazine), Hersey's article follows the stories of six A-bomb survivors, from two hours before the bombing through a day of unprecedented horrors and the painful, radioactive aftermath.

—JOHN TARLETON

on punk and lost in Brooklyn.

As someone who grew up in the vicinity of a sewage treatment plant (man, those things reek), I empathize with the rage expressed toward it by the film's anti-hero, Truffi: "I'm a high-profile assassin in a world of trust-fund bunny rabbits!"

She is accused of trying to blow up a treatment plant in Sheepshead Bay that happened to survive the explosion. Whether she is actually guilty of the initial crime or not is unclear, but she's full of resentment and out to finish the job with a homemade atomic bomb obtained through the post-Soviet, post-Middle-Eastern, post-modern underworld. If this sounds far-fetched, well, it is. But rumor has it that southern Brooklyn is a suspected location of some of the fourteen missing Soviet nukes.

Filmmaker Cihan Kaan made the entirely self-financed flick for under \$5,000 with the help of an underpaid but dedicated cast and crew. Although the film's proud papa says he wrote the script in 1994, production did not commence until after the fall of the twin towers.

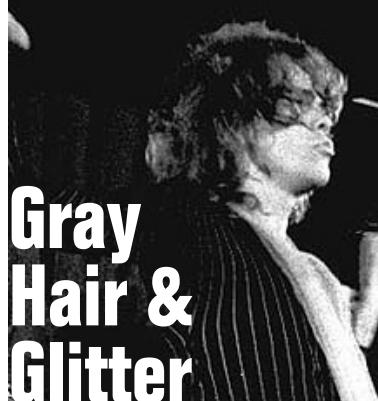
The A-String

BY STEVEN WISHNIA

"When I say I'm in love you best believe I'm in love L-U-V." That's Sylvain Sylvain introducing the revived New York Dolls at Irving Plaza April 30. I'm not expecting much. The band only has two surviving original members, Sylvain and lead singer David Johansen, and two of the dead, guitarist Johnny Thunders (OD, 1991) and drummer Jerry Nolan (disease, 1992), are absolutely irreplaceable.

I'm proven wrong from the first note. The new group has gelled as a real band, feeding off each other's licks and energy instead of rotely reciting the oldies. And they're obviously having fun playing to the hometown crowd. "Turn on the lights so I can get a look at ya," Johansen calls out, and the illumination reveals a singing-along sea of middle-aged rockers in sparkly suit jackets, catwoman eye makeup, and some amazingly well-preserved Max's Kansas City T-shirts.

This is fitting, because the Dolls were New York City's first great



Gray Hair & Glitter

populist rock 'n' roll band. New York ruled in the doo-wop and girl-group eras, but it didn't have much of a homegrown rock scene in the hippie epoch; the Velvet Underground are legends now, but they were an obscure art project then. Enter the Dolls circa 1972, a bunch of outer-borough burnouts who became the bridge between the rock-star glamour of the Rolling Stones and the subway-train grit of the Ramones.

The Dolls dressed in gender-bending flash and seasoned the Stones' trashy white R&B with the

Trans-Political

Can you imagine a conference of, by and for transgendered people? I couldn't until the very end of the Trans Politics, Social Change and Justice conference held at the CUNY Grad Center on May 6-7.

There were touching moments and tense points throughout the weekend. An older woman of trans experience stood up and expressed her confusion that some from the younger generation were gender fluid, not transitioning from one spectrum of binary to another. "I just don't get it," she said.

Sexy trans men dominating conversations. A white, normative male psychoanalyst curious about auto-gynephilia and really not understanding what it is like for people to be defined by a hostile medical establishment. Listening to people present ethnographic work on my kindred. Gender-normative participants questioning our ability to study our communities, because people might think we are biased.

TUDENT RESIST

Revolution in the Air

ell hooks

FEMIN

FR

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Though Bluestockings is hosting lots of exciting events in May, the store itself is closed for 3 weeks.

Yup, it's true. We are remodeling so we can fit more books and bigger events.

Tuesday, May 17th @ 7PM - Free - 21+ READING: The Trouble with Music by Matt Callahan (AK Press) @ The Slipper Room (Corner of Stanton & Orchard street - around the corner from Bluestockings)

Callahan unravels and elucidates the crises facing music as well as its liberatory potential.

Wednesday, May 18th @ 7PM - Donation -- 21+ The Tranny Roadshow @ Lolita Lounge (Corner of Allen and Broome Street - 3 blks south of Bluestockings)

Monday, May 30th @ 7PM -

Donation

Poetic License Tour 05

Incorporating numerous forms of expression including spoken word, video, live music, poetry, singing, synchronized dance moves and humor performers of the Poetic License 05 tour bring distinctly queer, feminist, radical-politically-charged messages to the stage.

to be HOSTILE



VOXPONNET.NET

FRI. MAY 13

\$7 (sliding scale) • 8pm
Carrie Taylor and Black Flamingo

Eclectic singer-songwriter Carrie Taylor and punk performer Black Flamingo.

SAT. MAY 14

Julia Othmer
\$7 (sliding scale) • 7pm
Combining elements of rock, pop, jazz and lounge, Julia Othmer rocks her audience.

TUES. MAY 17

Worker Word
FREE • 7pm
An evening of spoken word with Worker Word - healthcare worker and author Tim Sheard, followed by a full cast reading of "Sarcoxi and Sealove," the new play by Sander Hicks.

FRI. MAY 27

\$5 • 7pm
Poetry Slam
Winner will receive 10 free Insta-books

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BROOKLYN

on the street



WHAT WOULD JESUS BOMB? An anti-war activist hangs out on a traffic signal pole in Astor Place for nearly two hours on April 27 before being arrested by the NYPD. PHOTO: FREDASKEW.COM

THE INDYPENDENT

has open meetings every Tuesday at 7 p.m. at 34 E. 29th St., 2nd floor.

MAY 14-15

\$10
BICYCLE FILM FESTIVAL
Shorts and features on all things bicycle.
Anthology Film Archives, 32 2nd Avenue
www.bicyclefilmfestival.com

SAT MAY 14

10 a.m. to 6 p.m. • Free
MAYFAIR STREET FAIR
One of the first street fairs of the season.
Rain or Shine. Fun, Food, Music!
E. 88th Street between 1st and 2nd Ave.

2:00 p.m. • Free
PANEL DISCUSSION: PEOPLE OF FAITH FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE
Scheduled are: Reverend Osagyefo Sekou of Clergy and Laity Concerned About Iraq, Bishop Norman Quick of the Childs Memorial Temple Church of God in Christ, Reverend Earl Kooperkamp of St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Reverend J. Elise Brown of the Advent Lutheran Church, and Father Lawrence Boat, Prof. Emeritus of Washington Theological Union. St. Lukes Church Annex, 1854 Amsterdam Ave.

1:00 p.m. • Free
PARKS, PLANS, AND POLITICS: THE ANDREW H. GREEN HISTORY RIDE
A 15-mile bicycle tour examining the legacy of Andrew Green, Gotham's forgotten visionary. New York Public Library, NW corner of 40th St. and Fifth Ave.

1:00 p.m. • Free
SUSTAINABLE BROOKLYN BIKE TOUR
Tour Brooklyn's best sustainable buildings on a fun and relaxed bike ride. Corner of Jay and York Streets in DUMBO 718-788-8500 x208

MAY 14-15
12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. • Free
2005 ANNUAL PARK SLOPE & ENVIRONS

OPEN STUDIO TOUR
Over sixty artist-a-weekend long self-guided art tour through Park Slope and environs.
Info: www.bvac.org or www.ParkSlopeCivicCouncil.org

MAY 14-15

10 a.m. to 5 p.m. • \$125
PAPER TIGER FINAL CUT PRO WORKSHOPS, take them separately or together! This is a two-day intensive training where you learn the basics of digital video editing. May 14: Beginner final cut May 15: Intermediate final cut All classes are first come first serve and require payment to reserve a spot. (212) 420-9045

COMMUNITY CALENDAR MAY

MON MAY 16

1 p.m. to 4 p.m. • Free
POETRY IS NEWS
Emma Zghal on Cultural Genocide, David Leve Strauss on Abu Ghraib, Peter Lamborn Wilson on Classical Iraqi Poetries, Betsy Andrews on Bi, Gay, Lesbian, Trans Front. Curated by Anne Waldman and Ammiel Alcalay. Come support investigative poetics, imagination, sanity and cultural activism. St. Marks Church, E. 10th St. and 2nd Ave.

12:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. • Free
GETTING REEL: CONTEMPORARY PRO-CHOICE DOCUMENTARIES
Two films about speaking out and fighting for reproductive rights. Films followed by discussion.
12:30 p.m. *The Conservative Message Machine's Money Matrix*
6:30 p.m. *Speak Out: I Had an Abortion*
The Culture Project, 45 Bleecker Street

TUE MAY 17

doors 7:30 p.m. • \$12 - \$15
ANTIBALAS AFROBEAT ORCHESTRA BENEFIT FOR WAR RESISTERS LEAGUE, NYC
18 and over event featuring Antibalas and guests.
Southpaw, 125 Fifth Avenue, Brooklyn

6 - 8 p.m.
"AT THE MERCY OF OTHERS: THE POLITICS OF CARE"
Whitney Museum of American Art
Independent Study Program
Featuring the 'Danzine Retrospective'
Art + Video Installation
"Circle of Life" performance by Danzine member Ernest Truely
exhibit runs through June 25
Art Gallery of The Graduate Center, CUNY
365 Fifth Ave.
(212) 817-7386

SAT MAY 21

10 a.m. to 5 p.m. • Free
13TH ANNUAL ETHNIC FESTIVAL OF EL BARRIO
This day-long event will feature free live musical performances, spoken-word and poetry, workshops for kids and parents, an art exhibit and vendors selling everything from ethnic food to handicrafts.
E. 104th St. between 2nd and 3rd Aves
(raindate: Sunday, May 22)
10 a.m. to 6 p.m., continuous performance • Free
RITES OF SPRING: PROCESSION TO SAVE OUR GARDENS

An 8-hour pageant that visits over 30 gardens on the Lower East Side. Part of a 3 month environmental art project. The mythical parade features musical bands, and spectacular costume garden characters, dance performances, giant flower puppets, music, and poetry. Volunteers needed. An event not to be missed!

Begins @ Forsyth Street between Broome and Delancy at 10 a.m.
Visit www.earthcelebrations.com for more details.

SUN MAY 22

11 a.m. • free
2ND ANNUAL WEDDING MARCH
A march across the Brooklyn Bridge to demand the right for same-sex couples to marry.
Thomas Paine Park in Lower Manhattan (Worth St. and Lafayette St.)

12 - 5 p.m. • Free
COMMUNITY GARDEN WORKDAY
Event featuring garden building projects and a barbecue.
Carlton Avenue Community Garden, Carlton Ave. between Greene and Fulton, Brooklyn

8 p.m. • \$3
COMA AT ABC NO RIO EXPERIMENTAL AND IMPROVISATIONAL MUSIC:
Jack Wright sax & Robert Marsh piano/voice;
Mike Fortune drums & Kelly Pratt trumpet;
Carlos Santiago violin, Nate Wooley trumpet,
Evan Lippin bass, John McClellan drums
ABC NO RIO
156 Rivington St. (between Suffolk & Clinton)

MON MAY 23

8 p.m. • \$25 - \$150
LUSCIOUS 2005
Performances and appearances by Broadway stars, drag legends, and fabulous celebrities benefiting the Ali Forney Center, housing for homeless LGBT youth. Lucille Lortel Theatre at 121 Christopher St. (212) 279-4200 for tickets.

6:30 - 8:30pm • Free
GREEN APPLE DOWNTOWN ECO TOUR
Explores the Garden District, greenways and riversides, composting, solar, and green building sites. Special guest speakers and surprises. Youth welcome! Tour guide: Wendy Brewer of the Green Apple Map. 6BC Botanical Garden, E. 6th St. between Aves B and C

FRI MAY 27

9 p.m. • Donations accepted
TIME'S UP! BENEFIT
Reverend Billy and the Church of Stop Shopping will re-enact the April Critical Mass ride. Funds raised to benefit Time's Up! legal battle.
St. Mark's Church, 10th St. & 2nd Ave.

MAY 27 - MAY 29

\$10 suggested donation
OUTGROWING CAPITALISM: A GATHERING OF EXISTING STRUCTURES
Hartford, Conn.
The weekend will include workshops with NEMA, IMCs, FNBs and others. Organize tangible resistance against oppressive systems.
May 27 Critical Mass, welcome/sign in, open mic.
May 28 Workshops, PUNK ROCK PROM!!
May 29 "Organizing Resistance" meeting, Food Not Bombs picnic. Childcare will be provided. www.outgrowingcapitalism.org

SAT MAY 28

9 a.m. • \$15 - \$18 registration fee
HARLEM RUNNERS 6-MILE ROAD RACE
A group fitness event to support the Right to Remain Campaign, a benefit to preserve the Manhattanville residents and businesses. 135th Street and 7th Avenue
Info: www.harlemrunners.8k.com, or call (212) 696-8938 or (877) HAR-LEM

WEEKLY:

MONDAYS, 8 p.m.

ACT UP GENERAL MEETING
Lesbian Gay Bisexual & Transgendered Community Center
208 West 13th St. (West of 7th Ave)

SATURDAYS, 12 - 2 p.m.

WEEKLY VIGIL FOR PEACE, UNION SQUARE
14th St. and Broadway; call 212-254-1640 for more information. Sponsored by War Resisters League

WEDNESDAYS, 4:30 - 5:30 p.m.

GRANDMOTHERS AGAINST THE WAR
Weekly vigil held in conjunction with Veterans for Peace to show opposition to the war. All are welcome – not for grandmothers only! Rockefeller Plaza

SATURDAYS, 12:15 - 1:15 p.m.

VIGIL AT MILITARY RECRUITING CENTER
35-40 Main St., Flushing, NY
Sponsored by Flushing Friends Meeting

SATURDAYS, 1 - 2 p.m.

WOMYN'S CIRCLE — I AM AN ARTIST
Weekly group for women in the arts; resources, free classes, grant money info, self-employment info, and workshops on dance, poetry, writing, music, jewelry design, film, photography, collage, painting and drawing. The Tea Lounge
Union St. between 6th and 7th Ave., Brooklyn

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